

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 JIDDA 05363 041039Z

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FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5489

S E C R E T JIDDA 5363

NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, MASS, SA, US

SUBJECT: SIDEWINDERS FOR SAUDI ARABIA

REF: (A) STATE 192020, (B) JIDDA 5353, (C) STATE 190450

1. FURTHER TO MATTER OF SIDEWINDERS FOR SAUDI ARABIA AS AUTHORIZED REFTEL A, WHEN POLITICAL UNDER SECRETARY MANSOURI CALLED ME TO FOREIGN MINISTRY (REFTEL B), HE ALSO TOOK UP QUESTION OF SIDEWINDERS WHICH WERE MENTIONED IN NOTE FOREIGN OFFICE HAD RECEIVED FROM MINISTRY OF DEFENSE AND AVIATION (MODA).

2. MODA CITED ALLEGATIONS BY SENATOR CASE THAT SIDEWINDERS COULD BE USED AGAINST ISRAEL AND WOULD INCREASE THE MILITARY CAPABILITY OF THE ARAB WORLD WHICH NOW THREE-TO-ONE OVER ISRAEL IN ARMAMENTS AND MEN. MODA NOTE SAID SAUDI NEWS AGENCY CORRESPONDENT (KESHISHIAN) ASKED (RHETORICALLY) WHETHER RELUCTANCE OF UNITED STATES TO ASSIST IN THE DEFENSE OF SAUDI ARABIA IS RESULT OF ZIONIST PRESSURE IN CONGRESS.

3. IN CASE SUBJECT OF SIDEWINDERS AROSE AS RESULT OF MEDIA DISCUSSION IN WASHINGTON PRESS AND ELSEWHERE, I BROUGHT WITH ME SECRETARY'S COMMENTS ON SUBJECT CONTAINED REFTEL C. I MADE USE OF MATERIAL CONTAINED PARA 5, ADDING THAT WE NOW IN PROCESS OF DECIDING ABOUT TIMING AND NATURE OF APPROACH TO CONGRESS ON THIS SUBJECT.

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4. MANSOURI EXPRESSED BELIEF SAUDI GOVT WOULD FEEL REASSURED

BY SECRETARY'S VIEWS AND INTENTIONS. HE ACCEPTED WITHOUT COMMENT MY STATEMENT WE NOW DETERMINING HOW BEST TO PROCEED IN MATTER.

5. I WILL NOW INFORM PRINCE SULTAN (WHO IS NOT IN TAIF/JIDDA OR RIYADH AT PRESENT) THAT WE HAVE CONCLUDED WE SHOULD SUBMIT TO CONGRESS TRANSACTION FOR 1000 MISSILES, MENTIONING OUR INTENTION TO PROCEED IN MATTER OF THE REMAINING 1000 AS SOON AS WE JUDGE THE SITUATION OPPORTUNE AFTER OUR ELECTIONS. I WILL ADD THAT WE WILL AWAIT THEIR VIEWS BEFORE PROCEEDING AND THAT I WOULD BE VERY PLEASED TO CALL ON PRINCE SULTAN TO DISCUSS SUBJECT.
PORTER

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